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CIA Analyst Is Lost in Death Pact

Wife Rescued
After Plunge
Into Potomac

An Arlington mother was pulled weeping from the Potomac River at Great Falls yesterday, the survivor of a suicide pact which apparently cost the life of her husband.

Fairfax Police Pvt. C. H. Simpson identified the couple as Mr. and Mrs. James A. Woodbury, both 32, of 1412 N. Hartford st. A thorough search of the river below the rapids on the Virginia side failed to disclose the husband's fate last night and will be resumed at 10 a. m. today, police said.

Woodbury, a Central Intelligence Agency analyst, had "a lot on his mind," his strawberry-blond wife told rescuers, who kept her from returning to the river bank.

'Psycho Ward' Mentioned

"They wanted to put him in a psycho ward and we figured it best to do away with ourselves," Pvt. Simpson said Mrs. Woodbury told him. She did not further identify "they," police said.

A CIA spokesman would describe Woodbury only as a veteran employee and neighbors said the couple had returned to their Arlington home only recently from a two-year tour of duty in Frankfurt, Germany.

Pvt. Simpson said Mrs. Woodbury told him she and her husband sat for some time on a rocky ledge about 300 feet upstream from the Great Falls administration building, looking at the swirling waters.

She said her husband asked her before they jumped, "Do you want to go first?" She declined, she said, and they plunged hand-in-hand the 30 feet into the rapids. They were swept through "The Spout," a swift outpouring just off the Virginia shore which has claimed many lives in past years.

Seen From Ledge

Roy N. Willingham, 42, of Rt. 1, Vienna, said he had just walked out on the ledge downstream from "The Spout" and looked upstream.

He saw a man jump or fall into the rapids and watched him bob through the rapids. He was sucked into "The Spout."

He next saw him briefly in the whirlpool below before he was pulled under, Willingham said.

"I didn't think anything," Willingham said, "I just knew another man had drowned."

At the time, Willingham said, he did not know the woman also had entered the river, but a few minutes later he heaved her up the rocky bank. He recalled also having

seen the couple walking toward the spot where they leaped, but noticed nothing unusual in their manner.

Fisherman Sees Body

Mrs. Edgar A. McKean, 39, of 3324 Ivanhoe lane, Alexandria, said she became aware of the tragedy when a fisherman shouted that a man or a boy had floated past him. He tried to halt the body with his fishing pole but the current was too swift, the man told her.

About that time, Mrs. McKean said, she noticed the woman. She apparently had pulled herself out of the water and lay sobbing on a rocky outcropping, surrounded by slow-moving water about a foot and a half deep.

Mrs. McKean said she and Willingham went down to help Mrs. Woodbury up to the observation platform, but were told, "I don't need any help. I can take care of myself." The sobbing woman also cast off a sweater Mrs. McKean wrapped around her trembling body.

Tries to Twist Away

Willingham said he escorted Mrs. Woodbury up to the pavilion. He asked her about the man he heard the fisherman mention, Willingham said, but she kept repeating only, "You'd never believe it."

At another point, she tried to twist from his grasp, crying, "I've got something to do; I'm going to do it and no one can stop me," Willingham recalled.

Finally, Willingham said, Mrs. Woodbury identified the man as her husband. He asked if they had fallen in, he said, or if she had fallen in and her husband had tried to rescue her, but Mrs. Woodbury replied, "No, we both went in together."

A neighbor described the Woodburys as "a quiet, congenial couple, very nice people who minded their own business."

The Woodburys are parents of two boys, Jeff, 10, and Paul, 8, both of whom were playing in the vicinity of their home unaware of the tragedy at Great Falls until police located them hours later.

The family occupies a two-story white frame home in the Lyon Village area in which they had lived for about two years before leaving for Germany.

The older boy had been on a shopping trip with a neighbor. His brother, unnoticed by a policeman who arrived to see that the children were cared for until more permanent arrangements could be made, sat engrossed most of the afternoon watching TV in an upstairs room.

Two bicycles leaned against a wall on the porch and a metal foot locker bearing overseas shipping labels, still sat on the porch. Through the living room door could be seen a toy tractor on the rug in front of the fireplace. A silvery toy plane leaned over on one wing on a coffee table.

Hopes Husband Lives

In sporadic conversational bursts while awaiting an ambulance which took her to Arlington Hospital, Mrs. Woodbury asked police if her husband had been found yet.

"Just find him alive; that's all that's necessary," they quoted her at one point.

Three junior high school girls, on a picnic at the park under auspices of Arlington's St. Andrews Episcopal Church, told excitedly of watching Mr. Woodbury's course through the rapids.

One of them, Janet Jackson, 13, of 3739 N. 30th pl., Arlington, said she saw his head "popping up" periodically and that "his mouth kept moving," as though he were shouting something which they could not hear over the water's roar.

Another, Pamela Hartzel, 13, of 4016 N. 23d st., Arlington, said she saw Woodbury raise his hand several times as though trying to attract shore watchers. A third 13-year-old, Alice Bahrman, of 3040 N. Quincy st., Arlington, corroborated the impressions of her two friends. All three girls are 8th graders at Jefferson Junior High School.

Fairfax County Police Capt. A. Harry Croson said his department will carry Woodbury as a missing person until such time as his body is found and the investigation is completed.

Woodbury has two brothers and an uncle residing in the Washington area. The brothers are Wendell Woodbury, of 417 S. Lee st., Alexandria, and Maynard B. Woodbury, of 4519 S. 31st st., Arlington. An uncle, George Woodbury, lives at 5907 Portland rd., Silver Spring.

Mrs. Woodbury was accompanied to her home after treatment for shock and exposure at Arlington Hospital, by her husband's brother, Maynard, a Defense Department accountant.

He said he was unable to view the river tragedy as other than "an accident." He said

his brother to his knowledge had no problems, either mental or financial, which might have prompted him to take his own life.

He had not discussed details of the tragedy with the grief-stricken survivor, he said.

Maynard Woodbury said his brother was married about 12 years ago to the girl he first met while both were attending the University of Iowa. He took a degree in political science there. Nearly all of Woodbury's working career, the brother said, had been with the defense department. James Woodbury and his wife were native Iowans.

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